

## TRAIN ACCIDENTS DUE TO MISTAKES

(Continued From First Page.)

"This lack of supervision and inspection with respect to matters affecting the safety of trains is unexplainable when the careful supervision of all matters directly affecting the revenue of the roads is considered. The auditing and checking systems used for detecting the dishonesty of employees are marvels of ingenuity and careful attention to detail, but means of determining whether trains are operated in accordance with the requirements of safety and in conformity with the rules are almost entirely lacking.

Rules Should Be Explicit.  
"In previous reports the commission has recommended legislation for the standardization of operating rules. It is vital to the safe movement of trains that rules should be explicit and uniform in character, so that they may be easily understood and that there may be no doubt as to their application. To this end Federal legislation is necessary.

"Block-signal" signal indications on block-signalized railroads is one of the most serious phases of the accident situation. Such disobedience of rules occurs in connection with the movement of passenger trains, and when it results in a collision or derailment a most deplorable casualty list is its invariable accompaniment. Fourteen of the investigated accidents which occurred on block-signalized roads since July 1, 1911, were caused by engineers running by stop signals or failing to reduce speed as directed by caution signals. In these fourteen accidents 105 persons were killed and 311 were injured. In seven of these accidents the culpable engineers themselves were killed.

No adequate reason can be offered for these serious lapses from duty by men who in many cases suffer death as a consequence. Frequently it is hard even to suggest a plausible explanation for the disobedience of signal indications. That they are disobeyed, however, is a fact, and the lives that are annually sacrificed from this cause call loudly for some means of preventing the recurrence of such disastrous accidents of this character. The use of roads equipped with modern systems of automatic block signals, which elaborate precautions to prevent accidents, short of the use of signal indications, have been taken. The trains involved in these lamentable disasters generally are operated by trusted employees of long experience, but the record abundantly proves that even splendid signal equipment and admirable discipline, coupled with long experience and high moral character on the part of employees, cannot prevent accidents of this character which produce such fatal results. These facts are brought to the attention of the Congress, with the suggestion that these men failures indicate the necessity for the development and perfection of some system of automatic control to be used in connection with existing signal systems.

High Speed Also a Cause.  
"High speed was an important contributing cause of several serious accidents during the past year. On many roads there is no limit to the speed at which passenger trains are allowed to run. Engineers are thus encouraged to run their trains at excessive speed in an effort to make up time lost on schedules that are in many cases already sufficiently fast for safety. Such high speed is especially dangerous in times of fog or storm, when signals can be seen but a comparatively short distance. The maximum allowable speed of trains on all roads should be established at a safe limit, and it should not be left entirely to the judgment of engineers to determine whether or not this limit is exceeded.

"Inasmuch as the only purpose of investigation, the report continues, is to learn the true causes of accidents, so that such causes may be eliminated as fully as practicable, it is manifestly impossible for the commission fully to accomplish such purpose unless empowered by law to enforce its recommendations. Furthermore, the commission should be authorized to conduct independent investigations with respect to all matters affecting the safety of railway travel, the object being to prevent accidents as far as possible rather than, as at present, merely to point out the causes of accidents after their occurrence. There is particular need for an investigation of the conditions



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Delightful vocal and instrumental numbers that every one will enjoy listening to, and dance music galore.

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surrounding the use of steel rails and car wheels upon railroads.

Legislation Recommended.

Among the important recommendations for new legislation are the following:

That one period be fixed for the beginning of all actions relating to transportation charges, and that that period be within three years from the completion of the service as to which damages are claimed.

That a carrier which fails to demand payment of charges for any transportation service within a period of ninety days shall be deemed guilty of giving a rebate to the shipper.

That all suits brought to enforce or set aside orders of the commission be directly under the supervision of the commission, instead of, as now, under the direction of the Department of Justice, and that the commission be charged primarily with the duty of protecting such cases in court subject to the right of the Department of Justice or private individuals to intervene to protect public or private interests.

That the commission be given control and supervision over railway capitalization.

That further to minimize the danger of accidents the commission be empowered "to require the use of block signal systems, and to require the adoption and use of steel or steel underframe cars in passenger service."

That explicit authority be given the commission to examine all books and papers of common carriers subject to the law.

That the commission be relieved of all duties under the parcel post law.

"for that such duties, and the standards to be applied, be more clearly stated."

Physical Valuation.

The report gives some consideration to the law providing for physical valuation of railroads. Up to the present time it has not been possible to do more than prepare an outline of the plans for the great task of valuing American railroad property.

The report shows that the work of the commission increased tremendously in volume. Scores of violations of the law by both carriers and shippers were investigated. In this connection the report says that "the false billing of freight by shippers continues." It is pointed out that serious abuses of transit privileges by both carriers and shippers constitute a continuing evil, remedy for which is being worked out by the commission. Failure on the part of carriers to collect from shippers certain demurrage charges was made the subject of many investigations, because this is regarded by the commission as one of the most invidious forms of rebating. Stress also is laid upon violations of the anti-pass law, but the report indicates that these are becoming less and less frequent.

Charge Car Robbery.  
Ernest Wilson, colored, was arrested yesterday on a charge of breaking into a car of the Southern Railway Company and stealing a pair of trousers from C. A. Verell.

Albert James, colored, was also arrested on a charge of breaking into a car of the Southern Railway. He failed to get anything.

Rehearsal To-Morrow Afternoon.  
The group of songs which will take part in the musical program at the Community Christmas Tree on Wednesday will have a rehearsal at the John Marshall High School auditorium to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Ambulance Losses a Tire.  
The city ambulance reported to the police last night the loss of an extra tire carried for emergency. It was lost about 3 o'clock between the Southern Railway Station in South Richmond and the City Hospital.

## SENATOR WEST IS SEEKING LIGHT

Calls on State Auditor to Tell Committee What Treasurers Get in Fees.

State Auditor C. Lee Moore has been requested by State Senator J. E. West to furnish the Senate Finance Committee with a statement in detail of the amount received by the various treasurers of the State. The Auditor's annual report shows the compensation paid to city and county treasurers by the State, and in that connection Mr. Moore recommended a reduction in the commissions of all those handling for the State more than a specified amount. Mr. West made the point that since such officials also have duties to perform for the counties and cities, and also draw commissions from counties and cities for those duties, it would be necessary to get at the situation to secure a statement of the entire compensation. Mr. Moore is engaged in compiling from the reports of counties and cities of their own payments to treasurers, a statement of the total income of the offices for the information of the committee. Mr. West said last night that it was his purpose to ask for similar information with regard to commissioners of the revenue, who receive commissions both from the State and from the counties or cities. With full information in front of it for the first time as to what the fee or commission officers of the Commonwealth do receive for their services, Mr. West said the committee would be in a position to act intelligently.

## TURKEY TROT NEWS

This Time the Real Holiday Bird Glides Away Under Thief's Arm.

Hunter, who upon a padlock and the necessity of having a turkey for the Christmas dinner knows no law, so it could appear from two complaints given in at the Second Police Station yesterday, at D. Bloom, of 32 East Broad Street, reported that some one had entered his backyard and broken open a coop and taken three turkeys. He valued them at \$10. The turkeys were taken from the Shenandoah Place, who reported that her turkey had been stolen. Mrs. Loomis valued her turkey at \$10.

Francis Fleming, colored, was arrested on a charge of breaking into the outdoor stall of S. M. Taylor, 225 Hanover Avenue, and stealing sixteen chickens, valued at \$50.

## CHILDREN TO SEE OLD CONVICT SHIP

Pupils of Belle Bryan Day Nursery to Go as Captain's Guests on Monday.

Something in the nature of a Christmas entertainment will be given the larger children of the Belle Bryan Day Nursery on Monday afternoon, when they will visit the old British convict ship Success as the guests of Captain D. H. Smith. In response to a letter from the matron of the nursery, in which was mentioned the desire of the children to go aboard the queer looking vessel that had been seen from shore, Captain Smith yesterday sent the following letter:

"I am in receipt of your note of inquiry. If you think the children under your care would like to see the old convict ship Success I shall be pleased to have you and your assistants and such of the children as are old enough to appreciate the exhibit come on Monday afternoon next. I will include a complimentary ticket for your party, and on their arrival I will place a special guide to conduct them over the ship and explain in detail the various exhibits and items of interest."

In her letter the matron said that there are about fifteen children of eight to ten years of age who are anxious to see the ship. The visit will be in no way interfere with the regular opening of the ship to the public between the hours of 10 o'clock in the morning and 10 o'clock at night.

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Dr. J. W. Brodnax, assistant coroner of Richmond, viewed the body and pronounced it a case of suicide. He deemed an inquest unnecessary.

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